

## **1910 Auto Tour – Clearwater Crossing, Great Burn Proposed Wilderness**

Site Name: Clearwater Crossing

Site Location (road directions or map location): Leave Interstate 90 at the Fish Creek Exit #66 approximately 37 miles west of Missoula. Follow Fish Creek Road #343 south to West Fork Fish Creek Road #7750. Turn on to Road #7750 and follow it to Clearwater Crossing located 1 mile past Hole in the Wall Lodge.

Trail information if hiking: Three major trails begin at Clearwater Crossing including the North Fork, Straight Creek and West Fork.

Property Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Description of what is at site: A Forest Service campground, trailhead and administrative site, Clearwater Crossing Guard Station, are located at this site. The fires of 1910 burned much of the area in the drainages above Clearwater Crossing. The North Fork of Fish Creek and Straight Creek both burned in the severe fire. Hikers will see the results of 100 years of regrowth since the 1910 fire and maybe a few remnant burned trees. The 1910 blaze did not burn through the wet lower reaches of the West Fork drainage. Hikers on this trail will see old growth cedars untouched by the 1910 fires. Burned areas along the main Fish Creek drainage viewed from Forest Road 343 were part of the Fish Creek Complex of 2003. Most was privately owned by Plum Creek. These areas resemble what vast portions of the country looked like after the 1910 fires.

The Clearwater Crossing Guard Station is used today as a base camp for trail crews to access the backcountry as well as by the Ninemile Wildlands Training Center. The main buildings were CCC cabins moved to the site from Quartz Flats.



Picture of the Clearwater Crossing Guard Station site:

FS or partner information to call for more on site: Ninemile RD (406) 626-5201